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AT AN ALL-TIME LOW, SHANNON MUSES ON BUBBLE ECONOMIES AND THE DEATH OF THE MIDDLE CLASS PAGE 9

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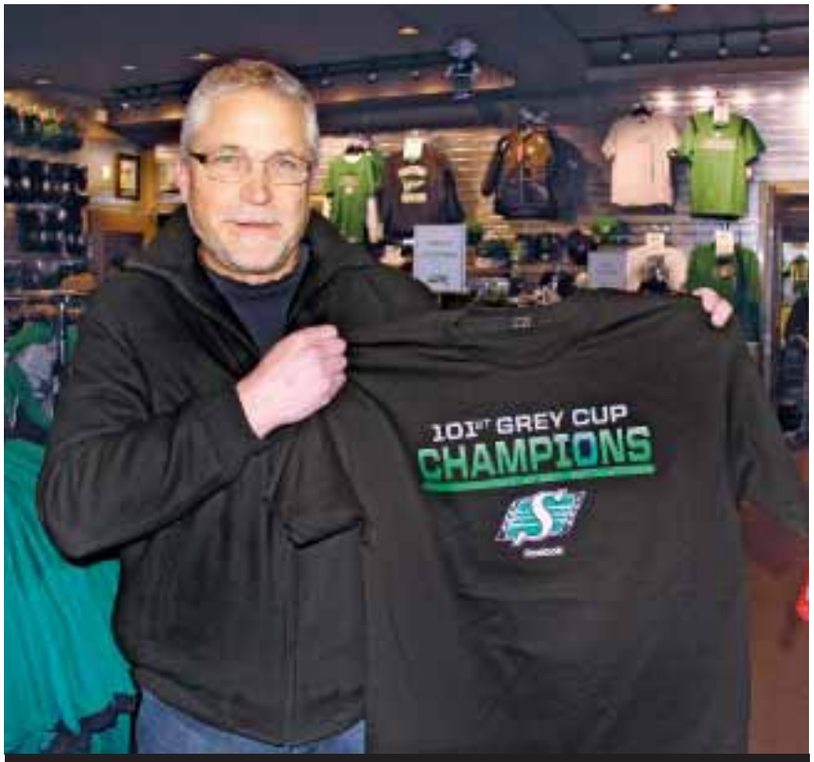

WEARING THE PRIDE

Roughriders fan Gord Rogerson looks at Saskatchewan's Grey Cup T-shirts at the Rider Store at Mosaic Stadium in Regina on Wednesday. The Riders are preparing to stock up on merchandise celebrating their CFL championship following a rush on such apparel since their big win over the Hamilton Tiger-Cats on Sunday. Story, page 2. ROSS ROMANIUK/METRO

Sask. budget stays afloat despite shrinking surplus

Fiscal update.
Lower revenues, but books still in balance

The Saskatchewan government's budget is still in the black, but its cushion continues to shrink.

A second-quarter fiscal update released Wednesday forecasts the government's program surplus at $22.8 million — down from $64.8 million when the budget was released earlier this year.

Decreases in provincial sales-tax revenue and money from Crown land sales are being blamed for the drop. Spending is also up by $8 million because of higher demand for disaster assistance and programs for the disabled.

Increases in revenue from oil and corporate income tax helped cushion the blow. A record crop is also forecast to bump up the province's economic growth rate by a full percentage point to 3.6 per cent in 2013.

"The budget remains balanced thanks to our strong, diverse economy and prudent expense management," said Finance Minister Ken Krawetz.

When Crown corporations and other government agencies are included in the financial picture, the government says it is on track to run a $467-million surplus — up more than $300 million from the budget forecast.

That surge comes from higher returns in the not-for-profit insurance organizations in the province's portfolio, most significantly from the Workers' Compensation Board and Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corp.

The report notes that spending increases have been limited to the Government Relations and Social Services ministries. Other departments are expected to either meet or come in below budget for 2013-14. It's hoped that will result in savings and debt-servicing cost reductions of more than $75 million.

CJME/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Opposition response

Trent Wotherspoon, the Opposition NDP finance critic, said the province's efforts to save money within ministries isn't necessarily a good thing when there are problems in emergency rooms and with seniors care.

- "The minister might be able to write this off as some sort of a lean exercise, but lean is also supposed to mean better results," Wotherspoon said. "We don't see that in health care and education across Saskatchewan."

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NEWS 1

Sellers of Saskatchewan Grey Cup gear ready for Riderville

Victor's spoils. Former Riders receiver says clothing presses are running 24 hours a day

ROSS ROMANIUK
Metro in Regina

It's a big, green sales machine, oiled and primed to meet huge demand.

The Saskatchewan Roughriders are scrambling to stock their retail outlets with merchandise celebrating their latest Grey Cup win, after their fans immediately snapped up a first run of a few hundred championship hats and T-shirts early this week.

"We've got the presses working overtime," Steve Mazurak, the CFL team's vice-president of sales and corporate partnerships, said on Wednesday of the production of clothing for Saskatchewan's four Rider Store locations since Sunday's Grey Cup victory.

"The moment we win the game, our suppliers are aware of that. The artwork is pre-selected. The creative is done. The presses start running, and run 24 hours a day. So whether it's tees or fleeces, a lot of that active-wear and clothing will be coming out on an ongoing basis."

Following the initial sales surge of caps and T-shirts marking the cup win, staff at the Rider Store at Mosaic Stadium were busy on Wednesday getting more of the $29 shirts onto racks.

Gord Rogerson, a Regina fan of the Green and White, was looking for more than Grey Cup T-shirts for himself and for his son living in Calgary.

"I need a sweatshirt, and I don't think they've got them in yet. I have a 2007 sweatshirt for the Grey Cup championship, and I want to update that," Rogerson told Metro at the stadium outlet, noting that he's prepared to wait.

"It will take some time."

Mazurak, a former Riders receiver, added that the team's director of merchandising, Mark Habicht, knows the kinds of apparel and souvenirs fans want.

"Whether it's the green that they would typically wear to a football game or items they would wear to the office or for casual wear, we're going to ramp it up and have our stores ready for that demand," Mazurak said.

"If you live in Weyburn, Wadena, Wichita, Kansas, or Australia, it doesn't matter. You'll be able to get that product. We're going to have it available."

Green light

"If you live in Weyburn, Wadena, Wichita, Kansas, or Australia, it doesn't matter. You'll be able to get that product."

Steve Mazurak, the Roughriders' vice-president of sales and corporate partnerships, on ramping up for surging demand.

Jerry Zimmer cheers as many of the Saskatchewan Roughriders players pass by on a float during the team's Grey Cup victory parade on Tuesday in Regina. LIAM RICHARDS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Better Bike Lanes petition gaining support

Just six weeks after launching, Saskatoon Cycles' Better Bike Lanes petition has about 1,600 signatures from around the city.

Sean Shaw, co-ordinator of the project, said the goal is to reach 2,000 before giving a presentation to city council in the new year.

"It's not the number of signatures to me that signifies the success of the program," said Shaw. "But it's good to have a demonstration of support for an idea."

The initiative is calling for two temporary installations next summer of separated bike lanes downtown on 24th Street and 4th Avenue.

"We're asking for a demonstration rather than something permanent … because it's a good way of judging if they work," he said.

Shaw added that he was happy to see this issue addressed in the new City Centre Plan, which seeks to transform Saskatoon's downtown as the population expands.

"It makes us feel better about what we're proposing, because it's something that's being discussed in the public," he said.

However, even if Better Bike Lanes succeeds in setting the stage for more cycling on city roads in the future, Shaw said there would still be more work ahead.

"We need to make sure we're able to connect people," he said.

"You could have great bike lanes downtown, but if you can't get to the downtown, those bike lanes aren't going to serve their whole purpose."

JACOB MORGAN/METRO

Sean Shaw is on the board of directors at Saskatoon Cycles and the project co-ordinator for the Better Bike Lanes petition. JACOB MORGAN/METRO

Funding request

North commuter bridge won't be built by 2016: Mayor

Saskatoon's mayor says a north commuter bridge will be built, but not by 2016.

Don Atchison said despite missing the December intake for funding, he is still hopeful the province will help fund the commuter parkway project.

The city is asking the province and the federal government for the same amounts to fund the project, according to the City of Saskatoon.

On Sept. 23, the city wrote a letter to the CEO of SaskBuilds requesting funding and acknowledging there is no formal application process, and on Nov. 26, the mayor received a letter back from SaskBuilds acknowledging the request.

Don McMorris, minister responsible for SaskBuilds, said they have not turned down the city's request for funding, but added a bridge within city limits isn't something the province would traditionally fund.

"It may reduce the volume of traffic on the highways eventually but normally where we get involved through the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure is when it is going through a city and connects provincial highways such as the South Bridge would do," McMorris said.

"We haven't said no, we haven't gone through the budget process, but it isn't traditionally what we would fund when it connects two city streets."

However, documents from the City of Saskatoon indicate the province has helped fund every vehicular bridge ever built in the city.

Atchison said the city has never been led to believe that the province would not fund the project.

"If they tell us we have to go in a different route we'll certainly attempt to have that done before March," Atchison said.

CKOM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Councillors say budget takes it back to basics

With city council meeting next week to discuss and debate the 2014 municipal budget — including a proposed property tax increase of 7.26 per cent, with 4.29 per cent dedicated to road repair — Metro Saskatoon reached out to city councillors for some insight into whether the proposed budget was on target.

MORGAN MODJESKI
morgan.modjeski@metronews.ca

1

Ward 1 Coun. Darren Hill

"The budget does speak to a lot of what the citizens have been asking for and that was specifically addressing the condition and the state of our roads.... I think budget deliberation should be followed up with some (operational) service reviews, specifically within our public-works areas and our roads division … to make sure we're using the most current technology and practices and procedures to ensure the best use of our financial resources."

2

Ward 2 Coun. Pat Lorje

"I'm pleased to see we're finally getting serious about road repair and the thing that I would like to see, but isn't there, is residential snow clearing. Not just plowing it, but clearing the snow right out of the residential areas."

3

Ward 3 Coun. Ann Iwanchuk

"The highlight to me is that we're going back to the basics, which is so important to residents. I hear it over and over again, so the dedicated (tax) percentage to fix and maintain our roads is a huge step forward … (and) I've been advocating for residential snow removal since I was elected, so to see two snow clearings for residential areas in this budget is a success to me."

4

Ward 4. Coun. Troy Davies

"For me, I'm just looking for 100 per cent focus on the four basics in Saskatoon, which is roads, snow removal, sewage and garbage … the biggest thing that we're missing the mark on this budget is that it's proposed at over seven per cent. That's what we need to do to fix it today, but it should have never have got to that."

5

Ward 5 Coun. Randy Donauer

"My assessment is that I'm very pleased with it. People have been asking us to get back to the basics and put more money into streets, roads, potholes and snow removal and we're going to do that in an unprecedented way."

Rob Ford. Judge allows release of 'significant' new police drug case data

More information on the "extensive" police investigation into disgraced Toronto Mayor Rob Ford should be released as it is of "very significant public interest," a judge ruled Wednesday.

Portions of the police document that were previously released showed former staffers alleged the mayor was intoxicated at work, drank while driving and associated with suspected prostitutes.

The document, containing allegations not proven in court, was filed in the drug case of Ford's friend Alexander Lisi, though it mostly focuses on the mayor. The actual release is on hold until Dec. 6. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"The actions of the mayor are a matter of very significant public interest and concern."
Justice Ian Nordheimer

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford has denied consorting with prostitutes and insists he is not an alcoholic or drug addict. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ford feedback. Why isn't he in the slammer? asks an amazed U.S. sheriff

A U.S. sheriff who has just charged a town mayor with drug offences said Wednesday it's a head-scratcher why crack-smoker Rob Ford is still in office — and out of jail.

Gordon Smith, a sheriff from Bradford County in Florida, said he's watched the Ford scandal unfold with amazement. "He's so flamboyant, he's out there, he's kind of smearing it in Torontonians' faces, saying, 'What are you going to do?'"

Smith said he wouldn't put up with illicit drug activity, regardless of who is involved. "This isn't Toronto," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Court arguments

Naked judge panel in spotlight

Lawyers argued Wednesday over whether the Federal Court has the authority to review a panel looking into the case of a Manitoba judge whose nude photos ended up on the Internet.

Manitoba Queen's Bench Justice Lori Douglas' lawyers have sought a judicial review, alleging a panel investigating her is biased.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Teen charged

When a slap is not a game

An 18-year-old student in Tilbury, Ont., is facing assault charges after a schoolyard game left another student with concussion.

Police say a 16-year-old student offered to let classmates slap him for cash. But after one slap he lost consciousness and struck his head on the ground. It's unclear how much money he received.
LUKE SIMCOE/METRO ONLINE

Generic 'hillbilly heroin' green-lit in Canada

Banned in U.S. Ottawa officials approve India drugmaker's take on oxycodone despite warnings from experts south of the border

Oxycodone is often referred to as "hillbilly heroin." The U.S. warns about its generic use. GRAEME ROY/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Health Canada has approved a generic, more dangerous form of oxycodone just as U.S. officials urge their Canadian counterparts to ban such formulations of the painkiller — often known as "hillbilly heroin."

The green light to Ranbaxy, India's biggest drug maker, came soon after Gil Kerlikowske, director of the White House Office of Drug Control Policy, reminded Health Minister Rona Ambrose of the dangers posed by generic forms of the opioid.

The U.S. has banned generic oxycodone because it's too easy for addicts to snort or inject. Only tamper-resistant forms of the drug can be sold stateside.

American officials say the U.S. is dealing with a painkiller abuse epidemic that is killing tens of thousands of people a year.

Ambrose hinted last month she was looking into the issue of tamper-resistance and signalled the government would expand its national anti-drug strategy.

"Prescription drug abuse is a growing problem that we are working with provinces and territories to address," Ambrose said Wednesday.

She added the Tories are also attempting to tighten licensing rules that would help prevent the trafficking of addictive prescription drugs.

She didn't comment on why Health Canada bureaucrats are continuing to approve generic, addictive forms of oxycodone.

Health Canada defended itself, saying it "rigorously" assesses every drug's safety and efficacy. "These decisions are made by experts in the department based on science; the minister is not consulted on day-to-day drug approvals," said spokesperson Leslie Meerburg.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Fast facts

What you need to know about oxycodone.

- **What is it?** A powerful narcotic used to treat moderate to severe short-term or long-term pain, as well as to treat terminally-ill patients.
- **What does it do?** It produces an opiate-like effect similar to morphine and can lead to abuse.
- **Brand names?** OxyContin, Percocet, Endocet, Oxycocet, Percodan, Endodan, Oxycodan, Supeudol, OxylR, OxyNEO.
- **How is it abused?** Generic forms of the drug can be chewed or crushed and then inhaled or injected. The oxycodone is then absorbed rapidly and produces a heroin-like euphoria.

Blue flash likely meteorite: Experts

Don't panic, says Chris Hadfield.

That was the Canadian astronaut's down-to-earth advice after many people tweeted they saw a blue flash and heard a thundering boom in the Montreal and Ottawa areas Tuesday night.

Two Ontario-based professors said Wednesday the phenomenon was likely a fireball, with one suggesting it was probably between the size of a baseball and a basketball when it passed through the atmosphere.

Hadfield, the former commander of the International Space Station, tried to offer some words of assurance, saying it's just part of normal life in the universe.

"Earth gets hit by 100 tons of meteorites every day," he told The Canadian Press on Wednesday while in Montreal to promote his new book. "Most of them are grains of dust — it's like we're perpetually being sandblasted by the universe.

"Once in a while we get a big rock that comes into the Earth's atmosphere and like in Montreal last night, it actually gets down low enough in the atmosphere to burn up as a blue flame and then make like a pressure wave that we hear as a sonic boom.

"What happened I think was just a part of the universe that arrived here on Earth."

Peter Brown, a physics professor at Western University in London, Ont., said sound usually indicates something has penetrated deeper into the atmosphere.

"It's certainly consistent with the effect we would expect for a relatively good-sized fireball that might produce meteorites," he said in an interview. Brown said it would be difficult to speculate about the size of the fiery object because of a lack of information.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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LGBT clampdown. Russia heats up rhetoric at home, cools down message to West

Anyone who switched on Russian TV recently might have been forgiven for thinking the Kremlin was relaxing its hard line on gays: Images of rainbow flags and a happy same-sex couple looking adoringly at their child flashed across the screen.

But the show, with its horror-film music, was another swipe at the gay community. The force behind it is one of Russia's top propagandists, whose programs have helped to bring criminal charges against those on President Vladimir Putin's black list.

The broadcast points to the double-game the Kremlin is playing on gay rights.

To the West, Russia has sought to extend reassurances as it prepares to host the Winter Olympics that a law passed this summer banning homosexual "propaganda" does not discriminate against gays. To its domestic audience, the government has ramped up the anti-gay rhetoric, unifying its fraying electoral base with a popular refrain of traditional values.

The TV show by Arkady Mamontov — who made his name by taking a hatchet to punk rock group Pussy Riot and other opposition activists — is the latest example of Russia's unwillingness to back down from its legislative crackdown on gays.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The two Russias

"There is always Russia for Russians and then Russia for the West."

Anton Krasovsky, a TV journalist fired after he came out as gay, saying the government chose issues it thinks are topics close to Russians, but at the same time, is trying to win back credit in the international arena ahead of the Olympics.

A police officer detains a gay-rights activist in Moscow in this photo from 2009. Russia is telling the West that a law banning homosexual "propaganda" does not discriminate against gays, but is ramping up the anti-LGBT rhetoric at home. ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Giant Louis Vuitton suitcase booted out of Red Square

Tourists and visitors pass by a two-storey Louis Vuitton suitcase erected near the Kremlin, right, at Red Square in Moscow, Russia, Wednesday. Politicians didn't like it, the public didn't like it, so the gigantic Louis Vuitton suitcase is being booted out of the square. The GUM department store, left, which is responsible for the nine-metre-high, 30-metre-long construction, promised Wednesday that it would be dismantled. The construction is part of an exhibition called The Soul of Travel, marking Vuitton's 150th anniversary and was to open on Dec. 2. Louis Vuitton said the construction was a copy of a model owned by a Russian noble, Prince Vladimir Orlov. PAVEL GOLOVKIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Macy's parade. Winds could ground balloons

A storm bearing down on the U.S. East Coast with a messy mix of snow, rain and wind is threatening to ground giant balloon versions of Snoopy and SpongeBob SquarePants in the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

The iconic characters that soar between the Manhattan skyscrapers every year may not lift off Thursday if sustained winds exceed 37 km/h and gusts exceed 55 km/h, according to city rules enacted after fierce winds in 1997 caused a Cat in the Hat balloon to topple a light pole and seriously injure a woman spectator.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sonic the Hedgehog was part of Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York last year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Berlusconi kicked out of Parliament

Not going quietly. Former premier has relaunched his Forza Italia party and still has millions of loyal supporters

The Italian Senate on Wednesday expelled three-time ex-premier Silvio Berlusconi from Parliament over his tax fraud conviction, ending his two-decade legislative run for now, but not his political career.

Berlusconi has warned that the unprecedented move would embarrass Italy internationally, and he maintained his defiance even as the Senate voted, addressing a cheering crowd outside of his Roman palazzo a short walk away.

Even though he won't hold a seat in Parliament for at least six years, the 77-year-old Berlusconi pledged to remain involved in politics and urged his followers not to despair — noting that other political leaders are not lawmakers.

Supporters, including Berlusconi's 28-year-old girlfriend, who had a Forza Italia flag wrapped around her shoulders against the cold, were treated to a video montage of Berlusconi's greatest political hits from a career that began in 1994 when he first came into power with a political party named for a soccer chant, Let's Go Italy.

"For us, he will always be there," said Marilda Antonello as she held a banner reading "The law is not equal for everyone. Sick justice."

The Senate vote on whether to remove Berlusconi from the chamber stems from a 2012 law that bans anyone sentenced to more than two years in prison from holding or running for public office for six years. His lawyers claim the law is unconstitutional and have questioned why the rush to expel him while legal challenges are still pending.

Italy's high court on Aug. 1 upheld Berlusconi's tax fraud conviction and four-year prison term. The prison term was reduced automatically to one year under a general amnesty; he will serve his time either under house arrest or through public service.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bitter words

"We are here on a bitter day, a day of mourning for democracy."

Silvio Berlusconi

Silvio Berlusconi and his girlfriend Francesca Pascale leave after he addressed a rally in Rome, Wednesday. ROBERTO MONALDO/LAPRESSE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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People stand in front of a metal structure that buckled on part of the Itaquerao Stadium in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Part of the stadium that will host the 2014 World Cup opener collapsed on Wednesday, causing significant damage and killing two people, authorities said. NELSON ANTOINE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deadly collapse at World Cup opening venue

Brazil. The Sao Paulo stadium, which cost nearly $360 million, is expected to seat nearly 70,000 for the opener

Part of the stadium that will host the 2014 World Cup opener collapsed Wednesday, killing two workers and aggravating already urgent concerns Brazil won't be ready for soccer's signature tournament.

Brazil has been plagued by a series of setbacks including cost overruns, stadium delays, accidents, labour strife and massive street protests in the run-up to the June tournament, once envisioned as a coming-out party for South America's largest nation, which is also scheduled to host the Olympics in 2016.

Wednesday's accident at Sao Paulo's Itaquerao Stadium occurred when a construction crane crashed into a 500-ton metal structure that in turn cut through the outer walls of the venue.

Already, public prosecutors and a workers union in Sao Paulo were demanding an investigation into conditions at the venue.

Ricardo Trade, CEO of the local World Cup organizing committee, said authorities would determine if there is a need to suspend construction.

"There are seven months till the World Cup, not 10 days, so I don't believe this is going to cause delays. But there is absolutely no guarantee on this," Trade said in a telephone interview.

The accident could lead to recriminations between local organizers and world soccer's organization FIFA, which has set a December deadline for all 12 World Cup stadiums to be ready. The tournament begins June 12.

"I don't want to know about FIFA right now; we are worried about the families of the victims," said Andres Sanchez, former president of the Sao Paulo soccer club Corinthians, which is building the stadium. The club said workers will not return before a three-day mourning period.

One of the workers, 42-year-old Fabio Luis Pereira, was inside a truck that was hit by the metal structure. The other, 44-year-old Ronaldo Oliveira dos Santos, was resting in an area which was supposed to be off-limits.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Construction

It wasn't the first problem with World Cup stadiums in Brazil.

- One worker died during construction of a stadium in the capital Brasilia last year and another in the Manaus venue in March.
- In April, another worker died at the construction site of the new Palmeiras stadium.
- In Rio, the stadium which will host athletics in the 2016 Olympics has been closed for several months because of fears that its roof could collapse.

Racism threatens to drive business owner out of town

For the second time in several months, a restaurant owner in the small Manitoba community of Morris says she is being chased out of town by discrimination.

Thea Morris, the Jamaican-born owner of Thea's Diner, said Wednesday she has received an email referencing the Ku Klux Klan and has been told by one of her customers that people are avoiding her business because she is black.

And since the KKK email, some customers have been behaving strangely, she said. People who appear to be in their 50s and very well-dressed come in, in groups of two or three, and quickly leave.

"They'll come in and sit down and order their beverage to start, and by the time you'd take the beverage to them, they would get up and walk out.

"It has come across as intimidating."

Morris opened her diner in June, in the exact same spot that used to house Pots N Hands, which was run by a gay couple.

Pots N Hands owner Dave Claringbould and his partner closed down in April. He said they were subjected to homophobic slurs, including one customer who asked whether the food contained disease.

Morris, who lives in Winnipeg, said she had hoped things would be different for her. Business was good in the summer, but customers mostly stopped coming at the end of August, she said. Then a series of strange events had her worried for her safety.

Someone left a dead hawk on the windshield of a worker's car, she said. When she placed an online ad for restaurant staff, she received a reply from someone who claimed to be linked to the Ku Klux Klan and who asked whether Morris residents were "still chasing colours" out of town, she added.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The town of Morris

"One older gentleman told me the reason people were not coming into my restaurant was because of my colour."

Thea Morris, the Jamaican-born owner of Thea's Diner

Snowden leaks

NSA spied on radicals' online porn habits: Docs

The Huffington Post cited a secret National Security Agency document that allegedly reveals the U.S. agency spied on the online sexual activity of Islamist radicals in order to find ways to discredit them. The website said the document, leaked by ex-NSA contractor Edward Snowden, shows the organization tracked six unnamed "radicalizers" and their visits to pornographic websites. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Northern Ohio

People flee homes over chemical leak

A city official says authorities have contained a spill at a northern Ohio rail yard where potentially flammable liquid (used to make plastic and rubber products) leaked from a railcar, prompting the evacuation of hundreds of nearby homes. Local responders and cleanup workers from transportation company CSX Corp. were at the scene Wednesday in Willard.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Racers rally for women drivers in Saudi Arabia

Former Finnish rally driver Ari Vatanen, left, and Tunisian rally driver Hend Chaouch, second right in red, pose as they take part in a protest against Saudi Arabia's ban on women driving, Wednesday, in Paris. Though no specific Saudi law bans women from driving, women are not issued licences, and rely mostly on drivers or male relatives to move around. CHRISTOPHE ENA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing cracks down on pollution one barbecue grill at a time

China. Country's concern about particulate pollution from open-air barbecues criticized on social media sites

Chinese police observe as a worker breaks down confiscated open-air barbecues in Beijing's war to tame PM2.5 pollution. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing is waging a controversial war against air pollution.

Authorities in the capital have destroyed more than 500 open-air barbecues "to cut PM2.5" — the tiny particulate matter in the air that can enter deep into the lungs.

Photos carried by state media showed workers on Tuesday cutting pieces of metal with sparks flying as city wardens looked on.

Citizens online ridiculed the exercise, suggesting authorities should focus on bigger sources of pollution.

A media officer at Beijing's Xicheng district administration bureau said the hundreds of barbecue grills were confiscated over a three-month campaign and cut up so they couldn't be used again. She refused to give her name, as is common with Chinese officials.

Environmental campaigner Ma Jun said residents had complained to environmental agencies about the odour and smoke from open-air barbecues. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Environmentalist

Vehicle emissions 'should be priority'

"This action will help local residents, but to deal with the bigger air-quality problem we need to have priorities and I think one of the major priorities should still be the motor-vehicle emissions,'' said environmental campaigner Ma Jun.

He said the focus should be on improving the fuel quality and emissions control of heavy-duty diesel trucks, while involving surrounding regions, not just Beijing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tough sentences in Egypt's crackdown

Egyptian authorities on Wednesday took a heavy hand against both Islamist and secular opponents, handing down heavy prison sentences to a group of female supporters of the ousted Islamist president — including teenagers as young as 15 — and ordering the detention of two dozen secular activists, all for participating in protests.

The moves mark what critics say is a bolder determination by Egypt's military-backed government to silence dissent, continuing a crackdown on Islamists since the military's ouster of President Mohammed Morsi, while suppressing secular activists who supported his removal but also accuse the new leadership of restoring a system as autocratic as Morsi's toppled predecessor, Hosni Mubarak.

Images from the courtroom in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria showed 21 young female defendants in white head scarves and white prison uniforms, handcuffed.

Among them were seven teenagers aged 15 and 16, who were sentenced to prison terms until they turn 18.

Supporter of ousted president Morsi in the prisoner's dock in Alexandria. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The rest — age 18 to 22 — were sentenced to 11 years in prison.

A day earlier saw the beating and dragging of secular activists on the ground during a protest outside parliament.

Police detained 14 women, then drove them in a van through the desert where they were dropped off on a remote road in the middle of the night in a move to intimidate them, several of the women said.

The crackdown is rearranging Egypt's political map after months when authorities were focused on crippling Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood.

The resulting crisis threatens to fragment the loose coalition of liberal and secular groups that supported the military in its removal of Morsi.

At the centre of the crisis is the law issued this week banning any protests or public political gatherings of more than 10 people without a prior police permit, imposing stiff fines and jail terms for violators.

Authorities say the law is needed to rein in continuing pro-Morsi protests and restore stability in a country rocked by constant unrest since the 2011 ouster of Mubarak.

The Islamist coalition supporting Morsi sought to reach out to secular activists Wednesday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Volcanic alert heightened

A worker who is covered with volcanic ash from an eruption of Mount Sinabung takes a break at a coffee plantation in Guru Kinayan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Sinabung's alert status was raised to the highest level on Sunday after eruptions.

BINSAR BAKKARA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pakistan

Americans criticized over drone deaths

A Pakistani political party launched an attack on the CIA drone program on Wednesday, turning up the heat on an issue that the government in Islamabad has tried to manage without sparking a crisis with the U.S.

The party revealed what it said was the name of the CIA's top spy in the country and called for him to be tried for murder.

American missile attacks targeting Islamic militants in Pakistan's northwest have long been a source of tension.

Friction has increased recently with two especially contentious strikes by the United States.

One killed the Pakistani Taliban's leader as the government prepared to invite him to hold peace talks, and hit was another outside the tribal region.

But the U.S. has shown no willingness to abandon the program aimed at militants beyond the reach of its military.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hold tight: Zip line over vultures, alligators and crocodiles, oh my!

Take a ride on the wild side. One of Florida's oldest tourist attractions brings in adrenaline junkies with obstacle course

I was slowly crossing a swinging log bridge when I paused, sensing the alligator 12 feet below was staring at me.

The water around the 8-foot gator's enormous body began rippling rapidly. A second later, Big Al let out a deep bellow, as if to say, "If you fall, you're my lunch."

I was grateful to be strapped in a harness.

The bridge was part of a 49-station obstacle course that includes 10 zip lines at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm. It takes visitors over crocodiles, lemurs, giant tortoises, vultures and, of course, lots of alligators.

"It's just a totally different perspective. You can go to any zoo in the world and look at them through the glass, but you can't go anywhere and look at them over the top of the enclosures like you can here," said Scott Brown, who designed and now manages the Crocodile Crossing at the zoo.

The alligator farm is fascinating enough on foot. At 120 years old, it's among Florida's oldest tourist attractions.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"The most amazing, awesome thing I've done ever."

Ava Martin, 53, who lives just north of St. Augustine. She and her 21-year-old son Corey were taking the course for the second time.

Ava Martin zip lining over an alligator lagoon at the St. Augustine Alligator Farm. BRENDAN FARRINGTON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Highlights

The longest zip line on the course is 300 feet, or the length of a football field. There are some very fast lines, requiring some quick breaking. There's also the occasional palm frond that harmlessly whacks your butt.

- "You'll see things that the public doesn't get to see," said Brown. "Whether it's other animal enclosures, animals getting moved, animals getting a vet visit, maybe getting blood drawn. And it's always exciting for the public to see a large alligator or even a small alligator getting caught, getting taped up and getting moved. You're always going to see something that nobody else is looking at."

Xbox One, PS4 glitches test gamers' devotion

Move over, zombies. Step aside, terrorists. Aliens, out of the way.

There are a few new foes affecting gamers that are proving to be far more destructive than any on-screen villain.

With nicknames like "the blue light of death" and "the disc drive of doom," they're the game-ending glitches causing headaches for a few gamers who picked up the next-generation Xbox One and PlayStation 4 consoles at launch.

Microsoft Corp. said Monday it's replacing the Xbox One units of users who have reported systems that won't read discs, an issue dubbed "the disc drive of doom." The company said the problem is affecting "a very small number" of customers, who will also receive one free downloadable game from Microsoft Game Studios.

Sony Corp. announced after the debut of the PS4 earlier this month that it was replacing the units for "less than one per cent" of users whose new consoles malfunctioned and displayed a pulsating blue light. The problem was nicknamed "the blue light of death."

While the issues seem to affect a minority of Xbox One and PS4 owners, the concerns could deter consumers who regularly play games on smartphones and mobile devices. Sony's PS4 costs $399 US. Microsoft's Xbox One costs $100 US more and includes a Kinect sensor.

Microsoft and Sony both announced that more than 1 million Xbox One and PS4 consoles were sold in the 24 hours after their release this month. It's been seven and eight years respectively since Microsoft and Sony launched the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gamers are, um, passionate about their consoles. Emanuel Jumatate hugs his new Xbox One after he purchased it last Friday. NAM Y. HUH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Costly error

The glitches recall Microsoft's "red ring of death," when production problems caused several predecessors of the Xbox One to lock up and display three flashing red lights.

- Microsoft extended customers' warranties and said in 2007 that it had spent more than $1 billion US to repair the problems with the Xbox 360.

Focus on commerce

Pushing 'economic diplomacy' top priority for Canada

The Harper government says it wants Canadian diplomats in foreign countries to re-channel their energies and resources into advancing the country's commercial interests.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Home mortgages

Consider phasing out CMHC insurance: IMF

Ottawa should consider phasing out insuring home mortgages through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., the International Monetary Fund said Wednesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Random biz fact of the day

16%

There has been a 16 per cent growth in part-time positions, year over year.

WORKOPOLIS

Phew! Shelve that Sriracha hoarding plan ... for now

A judge has ordered a plant that produces Sriracha chili sauce to stop emitting annoying odours.

Huy Fong Foods has said there is no reason to close the plant in Irwindale, Calif., now because harvest season and the subsequent grinding of red-hot jalapeno peppers — the key ingredient of the sauce — have passed.

The injunction may not have an immediate impact on the company's production or hot sauce supply as it continues its year-round mixing and bottling.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Don't sweat it: There's no Sriracha shortage yet. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Some not so hot on smell

"Why are people complaining about the chili smell?"

Randall Acosta, 45, who lives in an apartment complex across the street from the factory, said the scent can be strong sometimes but it makes him hungry.

Market Minute

DOLLAR 94.38¢ (-0.59¢)

TSX 13,362.06 (+12.29)

OIL $92.30 US (-$1.38)

GOLD $1,237.80 US (-$3.60)

Natural gas: $3.91 US (+3¢)
Dow Jones: 16,072.33 (+24.53)

Douglas Coupland

Douglas Coupland's latest novel, Worst. Person. Ever., is available from Random House Canada.

Day 19

metronews.ca/temp

Kitchen nightmares

There's no pay, but you can have all the abuse you want

Would you do a job where you weren't paid, were endlessly berated, forced to use dangerous equipment and denied proper medical help? Welcome to the life of a kitchen apprentice in the cutthroat culinary scene.

At times, it's like a real-life Kitchen Nightmares episode where even the most seasoned staff are berated to the point of tears.

"It is common for some cooks to be thrown under the bus by others because they don't want to look bad," one Toronto sous-chef explains of his early days in the industry.

IRENE KUAN/METRO

Seasonal work

Santa: The ultimate temp

Seasonal work as Santa pays up to $100 an hour, according to a PayScale survey. But all that non-stop cheeriness can take a toll. One Santa told the New York Post he wasn't able to leave his chair to go to the bathroom and got hit in the head with a frying pan by a scared child.

VAWN HIMMELSBACH/FOR METRO

Temp Hits an All-Time Low

Do you have a special place you go to when you're at an all-time low? Some people have a place, me I just drive and drive, past the strip malls, past the light industrial zones and past the fallow fields. After watching Kyle enter the refinery I began thinking of the world and how it's changed, even in my short life. Countries like Greece that used to be normal countries, now gutted of their middle class and overnight turned into something new and nameless, a land with no economy but with pretty good coffee and smoking hot Wi-Fi. I got to thinking of bubbles—how all we do these days is lurch from bubble to bubble. Are we in a new bubble? Is the bubble about to burst? I'm afraid of bubbles and I'm sick of bubbles—and yet I'm addicted to bubbles. Go figure.

I drove past the under-construction subdivisions that died in 2008, their 2x4s turned the grey colour of moths. I wondered if we're addicted to the idea that society without a middle class isn't really society. I wondered if maybe back in the days of Detroit, jumbo refrigerators and the Beatles we tricked ourselves into thinking that the middle class equals the future—and without a middle class we can't see pictures in our heads of what tomorrow might be. I find it strange how politicians repeat the words 'middle class' over and over and over again, as if doing so will allow us to pretend it still exists, that it's not evaporating daily like a puddle on a road.

Night came and I was anywhere and nowhere when my phone buzzed—it was Mr. Xu—he was back in town! And he had his big surprise all ready for me at his short-term corporate lodging suite. I couldn't remember the last time I was ever happier to get a text.

I drove to The Executive Privilege Short-Term Corporate Lodging, and ran to room 307 where the nerdy but lovely Mr. Xu awaited me.

"Ah, hello capitalist lapdog. You be ready for grand surprise?"

"Shut up! I can't believe you're back!" I gave him a smooch and said, "Okay, dial me in. I am ready for your big surprise, buster."

"Apologize in advance if not good enough."

I drove to The Executive Privilege Short-Term Corporate Lodging, and ran to room 307 where the nerdy but lovely Mr. Xu awaited me.

"Show me your surprise!"

"Very well."

A dropcloth concealed what was supposed to be the main living area. Mr. Xu pulled it back and I bathed in the majesty of what I saw.

He said, "Pretty kickass sexy, don't you think?"

I sucked in some breath and said, "Mr. Xu, you have truly amazed me."

Before me, in beautiful rows and shelves, lay over a thousand unique pairs of sneakers that would crash eBay in a flash if they all went up for sale at once.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Random fact of the day

- DiedInHouse.com supposedly scours millions of records to find out whether someone has died at a specific address. Real Estate agents hate it because a 'stigmatized property' can lose 10 to 15 per cent of its value.

SOURCE: OMG-FACTS.COM

Random biz fact of the day

21%

That's a lot of people lying: 21 per cent of resumés state fraudulent degrees

SOURCE: NEXCAREER

The clock is ticking

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

TEMP is ... well, temporary

Douglas Coupland's 20-day novella is a pop-up project and will disappear from our website this Monday at 12:01 a.m. EST. If you've missed an instalment, there are still four days to catch up at temp.metronews.ca — before it is gone forever.

METRO

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TIPS ON (COUGH) HACKING A COLD

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

Don't you hate when co-workers get over-detailed when describing their colds?

For instance, I've got a cold that started with a throat so sore that ice cream went down like broken glass and broken glass went down like jagged steel. Then it morphed into a sinus headache that I'm sure — any scientist reading can back me up — involved a small, angry man inside my head moshing to Shipping Up to Boston. And now it's the sneezy stage where I'm moulding a mound of used tissues into the mountain from Close Encounters of the Third Kind in the hopes that aliens will take me to a planet where the common cold has been defeated.

Who needs to hear that level of detail? Nobody.

Fortunately, my co-workers haven't had to worry about it because I've been on my couch for two days wishing I had a girlfriend who would come coddle me and/or kill me with an axe.

I've stayed home because I'm not one of those office heroes who somehow believes they contribute while laying comatose at their keyboard, occasionally blowing their nose with the mouse pad. I figure my one-day absence has less impact than a particularly diverting Google doodle spreading throughout the newsroom.

During my down time, I've been reading how to avoid office colds. So in the fine tradition of has-been goaltenders telling current NHLers what they're doing wrong, or failed politicians explaining how to get elected, here are my tips on avoiding office illness:

Quitting Colds, Turkey: A Guide to Office Health

- Hand sanitizer is a misnomer, and can be used all over your body. Stepping under the wall dispenser and acting out a Miley Cyrus video until you're saturated head to toe will keep you disinfected AND keep your co-workers at a good distance for the rest of the day. Win-win.
- Licking your workspace clean hurts as much as it helps.
- Remember that Vitamin C only works in conjunction with magnetic bracelets, garlic, echinacea and, sure, why not, Reiki.
- Though many people use sanitizing sprays, remember nothing gets your keyboard clean like dropping it into a bucket of water.
- Keep your hands clenched as fists so that every time you touch your face you punch yourself.
- A large hamster ball is probably not a practical way to cordon yourself off from co-workers, but it would be awesome.
- Remember that in the bathroom, a 15-second, hot-water scrub is absolutely necessary when somebody is watching. If you think you're alone, waving your hands under lukewarm water for a second is fine. If the only other person is in a stall, just running the water is often enough to complete the illusion.
- Cough in the face of people who are already sick, because what's the harm?

And those are my tips. I hope you found them helpful, particularly my co-workers, because I'm coming in today. Sorry. On the upside, you're not going to hear any details about my cold. Cough, cough, ahem.

ZOOM

Here, let me give you an arm with that

COURTESY DYSON

Man and machine get a little cosier

Think super-human strength is reserved for the big screen?

A team of engineers are encouraging you to think again after they developed the Titan Arm — a battery-powered robotic arm that gives users an extra 40 pounds in strength, and functions to rehabilitate those with back injuries by helping them to rebuild muscle and motor control. **METRO**

Dyson award winner

- The arm recently won the 2013 James Dyson Award, beating out 650 other projects from around the world.
- The team wins $45,000 to help commercialize their idea, with an additional $15,000 going to their school.
- jamesdysonaward.org

Inexpensive design

"Titan Arm is obviously an ingenious design, but the team's use of modern, rapid — and relatively inexpensive — manufacturing techniques makes the project even more compelling."

James Dyson said of the $2,000 prototype, which is significantly less than similar exoskeletons that run $100,000.

Tech advances make life easier

A team of four University of Pennsylvania mechanical engineering students spent eight months creating it.

The arm's shoulder is made of three joints that mimic the rotation of a human elbow, allowing for free range of use.

Plus it contains sensors that track motion and relay data to doctors for remote prognosis. **METRO**

Clickbait

HANNAH ZITNER
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CONTRIBUTED

With Wi-Fi popping up everywhere from underground subways to in-flight planes, there's more reason to put your apps to work. Once the domain of cash-strapped students, texting over Wi-Fi's been gaining popular ground (cause who doesn't like saving money on their phone bills?). Before your next flight or trip underground, give these a try.

WhatsApp:
Works on Apple or Android phones, WhatsApp is among the most popular and lets you send texts (including pictures) to your other 'whatsApp friends.' Only downside is, you have to convince all your pals to get the app, too.

Viber:
Similar to WhatsApp, but lets you send audio, video and even make VoIP calls, too. Perfect for long distance pals.

Zipaclip:
For those who need a little more bandwidth for their texting needs, Zipaclip (as it sounds), lets you zip videos up to five minutes long, so you're no longer restricted to texting 30 second videos. Also, keeps them secure. Just in case.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: @thehappycity book says urban design that fosters social ties makes for a happy city. What makes your city a happy one?

@Canucklehead_ca: An ample supply of beer and .... umm, I .... I'll have to get back to you on this.

@Lowpass: being able to walk everywhere and the restaurants, bars and other venues that come with that.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

Comments

RE: When A Stalker Strikes Online, published Nov. 26

I'm appalled the police can't do anything faster or sooner. Can't believe what this poor woman has been through, first with her brother's suicide and now this. It's just awful. This stalker should be prosecuted so they can't follow through with their threats. **KH posted to metronews.ca**

Hiding behind a computer to threaten someone shows you're a real wimp, pretty pathetic and probably a low life. **turtles have a say posted to metronews.ca**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU: Send us your comments: saskatoonletters@metronews.ca

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Back to basics in Berlin

Local music.
Saskatchewan singer-songwriter Julia McDougall fills Metro in on her move abroad and spreading her wings creatively

BACKSTAGE PASS
Jacob Morgan
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Julia McDougall spent the past few years after graduating from Simon Fraser University in B.C. working as a musician based out of Regina. This month, she picked up and moved to Berlin. Metro caught up with the singer-songwriter to find out exactly what was behind her decision to relocate. CHRIS GRAHAM

Last year Julia McDougall sang on her gorgeous I Don't Really Care EP about wishing she was "halfway across the world."

This past month she did just that when she picked up from her home base in Regina and moved to Berlin.

"Everything I had heard about Berlin in the past was really intriguing," McDougall told Metro over Skype from her new place in that city's hip and graffiti-covered Kreuzberg neighbourhood.

"I heard a lot about their arts scene and their culture. It just really appealed to me."

McDougall, who has been playing piano since she was a kid growing up in the small Saskatchewan town of Torquay and went on to study composition at Simon Fraser University, said her original plan was to follow up last year's EP with a full album.

But she began to feel restless.

"I was just really exhausted with the whole folk music genre," said McDougall of the process.

She is hoping to branch out in a different direction and possibly explore electronic and ambient sounds.

"Berlin is kind of the place to check out stuff that's going on in that field," she said.

Despite the fact that McDougall has undergone such a dramatic change in location and appears to be looking elsewhere for creative inspiration, she hasn't turned her back on her roots.

"Saskatchewan was so good to me," she said. "Regina as a community totally embraced me and accepted me."

Rather, her decision stemmed from a certain post-graduate angst familiar to many 20-somethings and young adults.

The emotional state is also reflected in her earlier work and scrawled across I Don't Really Care, so in many ways McDougall's radical shift shouldn't come as a huge surprise.

"I have a soft place for that EP," she said. "Its aim was to evoke that feeling of listlessness or wandering or uncertainty."

Whether it be with more folk music or with something completely different, here's hoping McDougall evokes more of those uncertain feelings in the future.

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Alec Baldwin

Baldwin loses his talk show but is still 'half' defiant over anti-gay slurs

Alec Baldwin has lost his talk show, which was officially cancelled by MSNBC in the wake of multiple controversies involving the former 30 Rock star, but Baldwin is still looking to set the record straight about what he may or may not have said to a photographer when he used an anti-gay slur. "I dispute half the comment I made," Baldwin tells the website Gothamist. "'F—t' is not the word that came out of my mouth. That I know. But you've got the fundamentalist wing of gay advocacy — (GLAAD communications VP) Rich Ferraro and (blogger) Andrew Sullivan — they're out there, they've got you. Rich Ferraro, this is probably one of his greatest triumphs. They killed my show. And I have to take some responsibility for that myself."

Miley Cyrus

Any link between Miley's burglary and her brand new teepee? Eh, no

Just because Miley Cyrus' house was burglarized and then a giant teepee was erected in her backyard a few days later doesn't mean the two occurrences are related. When the Native American-inspired structure went up at the pop star's home, reports went out insisting she was sleeping in it because she felt uncomfortable in her home following the break-in. But Cyrus' rep insists to E! News that the teepee was merely a gift from Cyrus' family, similar to the one they have at their home in Tennessee.

The Word

Thanksgiving holiday conversations: The celebrity version

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

What do the rich and famous do over the American Thanksgiving break? I have a feeling they are doing something fabulous and not doing what we do — hanging out in the townie bars in our hometown drinking cheap domestics with people from high school.

However, what if they did? For this special edition of The Word, Metro staffers imagined what kind of discussions the rich and famous have at their hometown hangs.

"Oh ... Kelly and Michelle ... Hi! Um, how long have you guys been bartending here?" **— Beyoncé**

"So, do you text?" **— Anthony Weiner**

"I don't know, y'all. Have I made enough of a statement this year that I am finally a woman?" **— Miley Cyrus**

"Guys, I know it's not like me to walk away from a fight, but if I get nabbed one more time for beating somebody up, I'll go away for a long time. Now, let's just chill, get another pitcher of Miller Lite and play some Keno." **— Chris Brown**

"Oh man, bro, last time I saw you, we were, what, in middle school? Can't believe it's been five years!" **— Justin Bieber**

"Wait, what?! You prefer the dark meat? Oh, hell no! Bartender, keep the White Russians comin' sugar ... " **— Paula Deen**

"Ima let you finish that Pabst, bro, but I have to tell you ... I'm pretty sure my Thanksgiving stuffing recipe is the best recipe of all time. OF ALL TIME." **— High-art genius Kanye West.**

"Yeah, everyone is totally buying this sweet, goofy girl act! Whatever, more money in my pocket. God I hate my fans." **— Jennifer Lawrence**

Jennifer Love Hewitt

Hewitt's baby-marriage double kept on down low

Jennifer Love Hewitt likes to keep things quiet. The former Ghost Whisperer star gave birth to a daughter, Autumn James Hallisay, on Tuesday, and her rep used the birth announcement to sneak in the fact that Hewitt has also quietly married fiancé Brian Hallisay. "Jennifer Love Hewitt and her husband, Brian Hallisay, are thrilled to announce the birth of their daughter," her rep tells Us Weekly.

Frankie Muniz ALL IMAGES GETTY

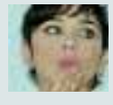
Frightened Muniz suffers another mini-stroke

At 27 years old, Frankie Muniz isn't having the best time, health-wise. "Almost a year to the day, I experienced another mini-stroke," Muniz posted to Twitter. "Hopefully that will be the last. Miserable." A mini-stroke consists of tiny lapses in blood flow to the brain. Last year he related to Good Morning America how frightening the experience can be: "I couldn't say any words," he said. "I thought I was saying them. My fiancée was looking at me as if I was speaking a foreign language."

Twitter

@justinbieber
Surfing and sunshine. Loving the Gold Coast.

@lenadunham
Secret of human existence: I totally think I'm the worst, just for different reasons than you do



@SarahKSilverman
It's all meaningless but don't let yourself get hung up on that

One for under the tree, and another one for me

'Tis the season to save on style. Self-shopping becoming less of a secret shame as fashionistas embrace this optimal time to buy their beauty booty

Getting up early on Black Friday for a little shopping? Doing your part on Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday, too? It's all in the name of gift-giving — or at least the guise of it.

It seems a lot of consumers are using these sales and retail events to treat themselves to a little something new.

As a group, self-shoppers are growing, says Marshal Cohen, chief analyst of The NPD Group, Inc., a consumer insight company. He puts the number at 20 per cent, up from five per cent in the early 2000s.

"I started tracking people shopping for themselves about 10 years ago. I was at a Black Friday in a Macy's in a suburban location in Long Island," he recalls. "This woman has one arm filled with a few things, maybe a dress and a few sweaters, and another with 12 items."

Guess which hand had the future presents for her two sisters and a friend?

It's a similar scene in Loft stores already this year, says Lori Leslie-Robbins, director of client experience for the retailer. "For us, the telltale sign that someone is shopping for themselves is that our fitting rooms stay busy for the holidays. She's trying clothes on, and you don't need to do that for a gift."

Leslie-Robbins overheard this past weekend a conversation between a sales associate and customer in the dressing room that went something like this: The shopper was in the dressing room choosing between a dress and a tuxedo-jacket-and-denim-jeans combo, and was taking seriously this choice of what to wear to a co-worker's at-home holiday party. When the associate asked if she'd also considered a hostess gift, the response was, "I'm not there yet."

Because of the deep discounts, shoppers see this as an opportunity to replenish their own wardrobes and homes with less guilt than buying the new pair of jeans, for example, at full price, Cohen says. Those same shoppers might not feel that way about a gift for someone else.

He says especially the early-bird holiday shoppers are looking for the sales for themselves, while the transactions made closer to Christmas are more likely to be bona fide gifts. He can also tell by what you're buying: If it's electronics or footwear, it's probably for you; fragrance is a go-to gift item, with 20 per cent of annual sales happening in the five days before Christmas, according to NPD.

Rachel DiCarlo is a fan of the one-for-me, one-for-you theory.

Jewellery and scarves, perfectly good gifts for others, are also the items she tends to buy for herself. Last year, she couldn't resist the initial necklaces she was buying for so many others. "I was getting the Ls, the Js, and I thought, 'I should buy an R.'"

She is the vice-president of public relations at American Eagle Outfitters and, in her office, everyone tends to dress similarly. So, she says with a laugh, it makes sense to get for herself the shirt or accessory she is getting for the members in her team — although, everyone gets a different colour.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

We're certain Santa would encourage doing something nice for yourself this yuletide. ISTOCK

You deserve a good deal

Many of the self-purchases Loft's Leslie-Robbins sees in stores are those that solve problems or have a focused end use — this tends to alleviate that pang of guilt, she says.

- A woman needs to buy herself the items no one else will buy her, right? muses Robin White, global press director of beauty brand Philosophy. There's also "the stuff you need" and "the stuff you enjoy buying."
- She takes pleasure, for example, in a new tube of eye cream — it really makes her day, she says, but it's not quite what she'd want to unwrap Christmas morning. That makes it the perfect self-purchase.

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Vancouver

Name: Nikki

Age: 24

Occupation: Sales associate

What she's wearing
Jacket from Aritzia, vintage leather vest from Nouvelle Nouvelle, T-shirt from Cheap Monday, jeans and bag from American Apparel, shoes from Converse and sunglasses from Stella McCartney.

Her inspiration
"This is my Saturday outfit ... running errands."

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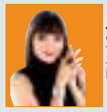


JEANNE SPACE
Jeanne Beker
life@metronews.ca

TWITTER HAS BECOME A COOL AND SUCCINCT WAY OF COMMUNICATING. IT ALLOWS ME TO BE ACCESSIBLE, INSTANTLY SPEAK MY MIND AND CONNECTS ME WITH ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE. WHETHER IT'S A FASHION QUESTION OR YOU JUST WANT TO COMMENT ON LIFE'S BIGGER PICTURE, I'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

Xmas shopping in Kensington Mkt + went nuts at Model Citizen, Augusta St. Discovered jewellery designer Kimberly Dale!

Bundled up to brave the cold. I feel like a walking ad for @TheHudsonsBayCo ! #proudlycanadian

LIFE 3

Expert offers no-bull tactics to scoring best Black Friday deals

Run, bargain hunter, run. If you are brave enough to participate in a crush of crazy shoppers this Friday, you need some tips

MAJA LUNDAGER
Metro World News in New York

Braving Black Friday crowds this year? You need survival skills! ISTOCK

If you look up Black Friday on YouTube, you're bound to find a lot of videos with terrible titles like Black Friday Fights, Black Friday Disasters or Black Friday 2012 Madness. But the horrifying stigma of this day doesn't seem to scare the thousands of brave shoppers who voluntarily run with the big box store crowd, fighting for killer deals on last year's food processor.

As with all other extreme sports, you need to prepare for Black Friday shopping. We went to the best: Mark Hellmann Regouby.

Is Regouby an experienced Black Friday shopper? Not really. But he'll do you one better. He's the founder of the travel company Running of the Bulls, Inc., which puts tourists up close and personal with the animals at the annual event in Pamplona, Spain. Here's his advice for braving big crowds.

Before you go in

"We tell them … watch the Bull Run first so they can see how it works and understand the flow of the people and the bulls and make their strategy from overviewed conditions," he says. This is where the aforementioned YouTube search for Black Friday videos will come in handy. But the preparation doesn't stop here. If you were planning to hit the bottle to take the edge off of Black Friday shopping, you'd better think twice. "The No. 1 rule is to arrive sober," Regouby says. "No. 2 is to get a good night's sleep. No. 3 is to have 360-degree awareness. Always try to be aware of who is in front, behind and beside you. Really get a sense of being in the place."

Surviving in the heat of battle

"The best runners always say you stake out your territory," says Regouby. "You use your arms and don't let anybody get too much in your way. Swing your arms and keep in your elbows to make sure you've got your own space that you need in order to run without tripping."

This sounds extreme, but seriously, do you want that food processor or not?

If you go down

There have only been 15 deaths since the beginning of the Bull Run in Pamplona in 1910, but broken wrists and bloodied chins are the norm. According to Regouby, there are more falls and injuries because of humans tripping over each other than because of the bulls. We can, with some certainty, say the same about Black Friday, except that the National Retail Federation in the U.S. — the homeland of Black Friday — has only reported one trampling death: In 2008 a Walmart employee was crushed in a stampede. So what do you do if you go down?

"The most important rule of all is if you go down, stay down. The bulls are actually talented at stepping over obstacles and as long as you cover your head and stay down and don't move, they can plan to step over you."

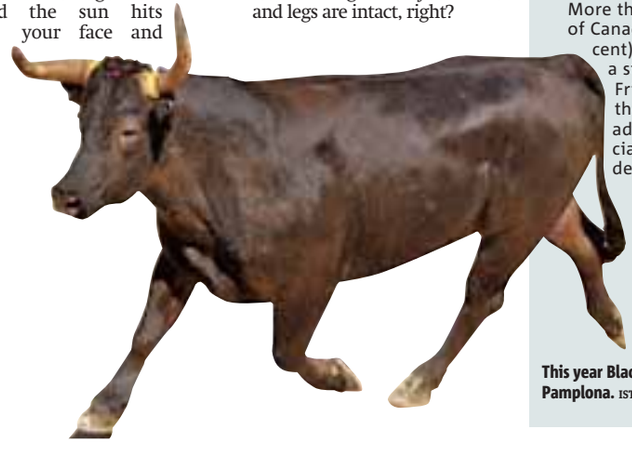
We can only hope the same counts for the herds at Best Buy and Target. Actually, we're going to say that the people waiting in the cold to buy stuff at discount prices are NOT talented at stepping over obstacles, so we advise just trying to roll to safety!

When you succeed

Regouby says that a run like the one in Pamplona is for people who want to be in touch with their own mortality and live their lives to the fullest.

"I have [run with the bulls] four times and it's still pretty incredible," he says. "You arrive in this huge arena and the sun hits your face and the air is fresh again, and you can't believe you are alive."

That sounds a bit like waking up way too early on Black Friday and shortly afterward hauling bags of discounted goods to the parking lot, realizing all of your arms and legs are intact, right?



This year Black Friday. Next? Pamplona. ISTOCK

Canadian context

While Black Friday is a relatively new shopping event in Canada, the day's quick rise in popularity among Canadians is having an impact on Canuck retailers' holiday sales strategy. Consulting firm Accenture recently released the results of a survey into the habits of Canadians when it comes to Black Friday. Here are some findings:

- **Hungry for the best deals.** Almost two thirds of Canadians surveyed plan to shop at U.S. retailers, online or in-store, on Black Friday and throughout the holiday season.
- **Boxing Day.** Is still believed by many (44 per cent) to offer the best deals of the season in Canada, Canadians feel retailers in Canada are not doing enough to compete with U.S. stores on Black Friday.
- **Go south.** When Canadians surveyed were asked when they believed they would see the best deals of the holiday season (either in Canada or the U.S.), Black Friday in the U.S. was cited by almost half (42 per cent), while less than a quarter (23 per cent) said the best deals were to be had on Black Friday in Canada.
- **Bust down the door.** More than a quarter of Canadians (27 per cent) would shop in a store on Black Friday because they want to take advantage of special door buster deals.

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Take an additional 20% off your entire purchase, between 7AM-9AM Friday, November 29th ONLY. Not valid toward the purchase of Gift Cards.

After shopping, it's a wrap!

Not all gifts come in the shape of a box that's easy to wrap. Let's face it, even boxes are hard. Ever wonder how Aunt Doris gets her corners so crisp? Not sure how to wrap an awkward-shaped present? Elana White, owner of Toronto gift shop Outer Layer, shares four novel ways to wrap yours up this holiday season.

MAE BOWRING
Metro News Canada

Odd-shaped gift

Booze, lotions and bubble bath are all popular gifts, but they're also round. Instead of trying to wrap it into a hot mess, try this creative solution.

What you need:
- Two pieces of coloured tissue
- Clear plastic bag
- Three pieces of coloured ribbon

How to do it:
Place two pieces of the same coloured tissue on top of two others, creating a T-shape. Lay the gift down in the middle of the tissue. Fold the bottom of the tissue upwards and then the sides over, creating a cone around the gift. Place the cone in a plastic bag and tie the ribbon just above the top of the gift. Curl the ribbon with scissors and adjust the excess paper "poof" on top. Ribbon curling tip: Look to see how the ribbon curls naturally, and drag the scissor blade down the same side to get a tight curl effect.

Traditional box

Board games, shoeboxes — you're laughing because you think this wrapping job will be a cinch. But it's not. Where people go wrong, White says, is having too much wrapping paper.

What you need:
- Holiday wrapping paper
- Scissors
- Clear tape

How to do it:
After taping the paper together length-wise, tackle the sides. The wrapping paper should only come halfway up the gift width-wise, White explains. Ready for the secret trick? Fold the top of the paper all the way down, enforcing a crease on either side. That should make it easier to tuck in the sides, followed by the bottom. From there you need one small piece of tape to hold it together. Repeat on the other side.

Basket

If your gift has a theme that's too pretty to hide, a basket is another option.

What you need:
- A basket
- Newspaper
- Colourful shredded paper
- Roll of clear cellophane
- Ribbon

How to do it:
Fill the bottom of the basket with newspaper and place the shredded paper on top. This will prevent the items from falling into the basket and out of sight. Place each item on top of the shredded paper at an angle, starting from the back to the front. Cover the basket in cellophane and tie it together with ribbon toward the back of the basket. Cut excess cellophane away and gently curl ribbon.

With these simple tricks, you'll be smiling instead of swearing at wrapping time. ISTOCK

Bag it

Have a bunch of small items that will fit into a gift bag? Bags are great but people tend to go overboard with tissue paper trying to make it look pretty, says White.

What you need:
- One festive bag
- Four pieces of coloured tissue, two different colours
- Coloured ribbon

How to do it:
Put gift inside the bag. Make a T-shape with the two colours of tissue and put the brighter coloured tissue on top. Pinch the middle of the tissue and give it a shake upside down. It will create a nice V-shaped "poof" that will fill up one side of the bag. Repeat and place the second "poof" on the other side of the bag. The trick, White says, is doing more with less. "We always train new people on how to do the poof." Tie bag handles shut with ribbon and gently curl it so that the ribbon cascades down the side of the bag.

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Tartan it up for the holidays

Plaid is one of the most popular patterns during the festive season — the clean lines look great in both modern and traditional interiors, and they're a perfect way to add variety to a room with solid colours (so long as you remember to never mix plaids together). From tabletop items to wallpapers, there's a wide array of accessories that bring a touch of the old clan to your home.

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Add some old-school style to your work commute. Plaid Lunch Box and Thermal Carafe, $40 each, crateandbarrel.com.

Subtle grey plaid adds modern sophistication to walls. Audrey Charcoal Wallpaper, $85 per roll, grahambrown.ca.

Stay warm during those cold nights. Nordic Plaid Duvet Cover Set, $75, simons.ca.

Punchy colours modernize the season's favorite pattern. Lord & Taylor Buffalo Plaid Duvet Cover, $69-89, thebay.com.

Drive in style while keeping your hands toasty. Plaid Steering Wheel Cover, $15, canadiantire.ca.

Scotch and soda never went down so easy. PC Tartan Glasses, four for $9, Real Canadian Superstore.

Add bright colours underfoot. Modern Plaid 5x8 foot Wool Rug, $450, cb2.com

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Usher in the holiday baking season with rich Lemon Walnut Bars

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup large-flake rolled oats
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1/2 cup ground walnuts
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 300 ml can condensed milk (about 1 1/4 cups)
- 1/2 cup lemon juice, freshly squeezed (about 2 lemons)

You Will Need

- (9- x 9-inch) pan buttered and lined with parchment paper

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F.

2. In a small saucepan over low heat, melt the butter (or melt in the microwave for about 30 seconds on high).

3. In a large bowl, combine the oats, flour, sugar, coconut, ground walnuts and baking powder. Pour in the melted butter and mix with a spatula or large spoon until the butter is evenly distributed. Press half the oat mixture into the prepared pan firmly and evenly.

4. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the condensed milk and lemon juice until fully combined and slightly thickened. Pour the lemon mixture over the base. Use the back of a spoon or a small offset spatula to spread the filling evenly across the base. Sprinkle the remaining half of the oat mixture over the filling.

5. Bake in the preheated oven for 22 to 25 minutes or until the top is a golden brown.

6. Remove from the oven and allow to cool completely in the pan.

7. Run a small knife along the two edges of the pan that do not have parchment handles. Carefully remove the slabs from the pan and cut into approximately 2- x 2-inch bars. Make sure to use at least a 10-inch knife to avoid cutting and dragging the knife across the bars.

This recipe makes 16 bars. ALL PHOTOS JANIS NICOLAY

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Cookbook of the Week

Get to sifting

Before it was a book filled with 100 recipes, Butter Baked Goods was (and still is) a tiny bakery in Vancouver. Opened by the author of the book, Rosie Daykin, it is known as the home of the very best gourmet marshmallow in North America.

In Butter Baked Goods, Daykin shares homemade treats and childhood favourites through instructions that are easy to follow.

Among the delicacies in the book are: Butter's Chocolate Cake, Red Velvet Cupcakes, Peanut Butter Balls and more. METRO

Classic tropical combination: Pineapple Coconut Scones

"Every day at Butter we make a different scone," writes Rosie Daykin of her Vancouver bakery in her book Butter Baked Goods. "There is no set schedule, so regular customers call us in the morning to check what we have on tap that day.

"This flavour never seems to disappoint, and when we tell them it's on the menu, they hightail it over to get one."

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.

2. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, quickly mix the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt on low speed to blend. Add the butter cubes and mix until large crumbs form. Add the coconut and mix again to distribute. Add the buttermilk, crushed pineapple and juice and mix until almost combined.

3. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and roll out to about 1-inch thick. Use the circular cutter to cut out 10 circles and place them on the prepared cookie sheet about 1 1/2 inches apart.

This recipe makes 10 scones.

4. In a bowl, whisk together the egg and water to make an egg wash. Use a pastry brush to gently coat the top of each scone with the wash. Sprinkle with a little sanding sugar.

5. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden brown. A wooden skewer inserted into the center should come out clean.

6. Remove from the oven and allow the scones to cool on the cookie sheets. Then split them open and spread with lots of butter and jam!

Ingredients

- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/3 cups sugar
- 3 tbsp baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups butter, chilled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 1 14-oz can crushed pineapple with juice

Finishing

- 1 large egg
- 2 tbsp cold water
- Coarse sanding sugar, for sprinkling

You Will Need

- Cookie sheet, 3 1/2-inch circular cutter

Dessert. Vanilla Shortbread

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F.

2. In a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, cream the butter and icing sugar on medium to high speed until light and fluffy. Scrape down the sides of the bowl.

3. Turn the mixer to low and add the flour and mix until just combined. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Add the vanilla and mix to combine.

4. Place dough on a lightly floured work surface. Use a rolling pin to roll out the dough to about 1/4 inch thick. Use the circular cutter to cut out 24 circles. Transfer to the prepared cookie sheets and place about 1/2 inch apart.

5. Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes or until the cookies are lightly golden brown around the edges.

6. Remove from oven and sprinkle the cookies generously with granulated sugar while still warm. Transfer to wire racks to cool.

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter, room temperature
- 1 cup icing sugar
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp pure vanilla

Finishing

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar, for dusting

You Will Need

- 2 cookie sheets lined with parchment paper, 2 1/2-inch circular cutter with scalloped edge

Olympic hockey

Roster deadline moved to Jan. 7

The roster deadline for the 2014 Sochi Olympics has been pushed back to Jan. 7, the International Ice Hockey Federation announced.

Originally, national federations had until Dec. 31 to submit 25-man rosters for the tournament, which begins Feb. 12. Russia and other European countries were lobbying for a later date and got their wish.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Flyers at Lightning

Hedman spoils Lecavalier's return to Tampa

Victor Hedman had two goals and an assist to help the Tampa Bay Lightning beat the Philadelphia Flyers 4-2 on Wednesday night, spoiling Vincent Lecavalier's homecoming.

Lecavalier, who played 14 years for the Lightning after being selected first overall in the 1998 draft, faced his old team for the first time and scored a power-play goal late in the third period. The former Tampa Bay captain received a standing ovation after a video tribute was played on the scoreboard midway through the first.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Curling

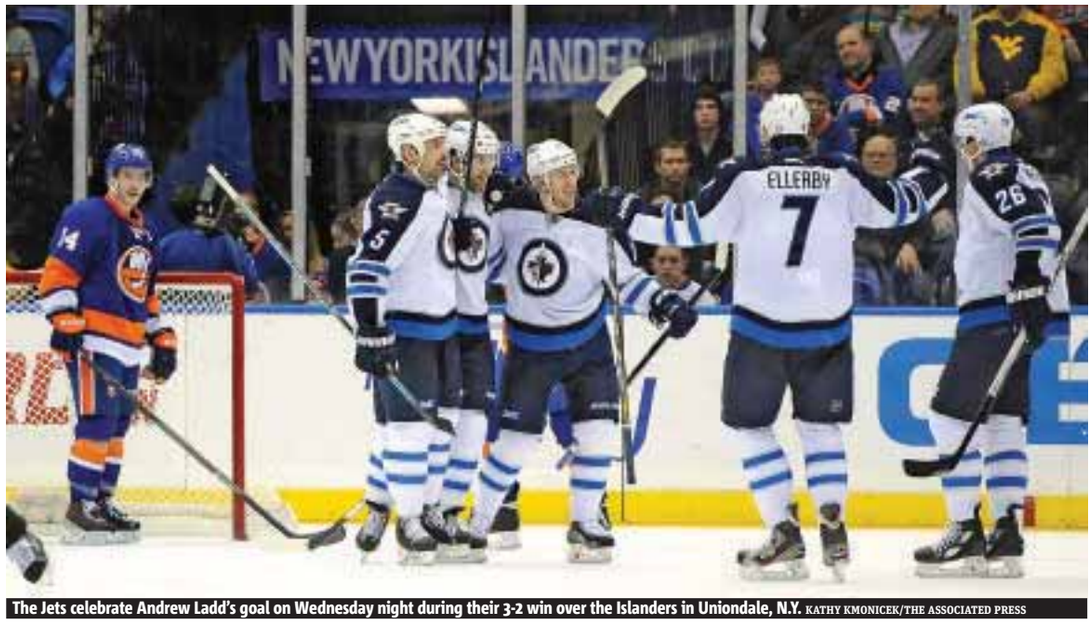
Scotties coming to Moose Jaw

Moose Jaw will host Canada's top women's curlers for the 2015 Scotties Tournament of Hearts.

The Canadian Curling Association announced the site Wednesday for the Feb. 14-22 event at Mosaic Place, marking the first time the Saskatchewan city will host the Canadian women's championships.

It's not the first time Mosaic Place has hosted world class curling, though — the 2012 Capital One Canada Cup of Curling broke attendance records for the event at the 4,465-seat facility.

"The 2012 Canada Cup was a shining example of a city supporting our sport and our curlers," CCA CEO Greg Stremlaw said in a release. THE CANADIAN PRESS



The Jets celebrate Andrew Ladd's goal on Wednesday night during their 3-2 win over the Islanders in Uniondale, N.Y. KATHY KMONICEK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jets off to winning start on East Coast

NHL. Winnipeg gets enough offence in second-period outburst to top Isles

The Winnipeg Jets are off to a good start on a six-game road trip after trouble winning at home.

The Islanders are struggling no matter where they are playing.

Mark Stuart, Andrew Ladd and Devin Setoguchi scored second-period goals and Al Montoya made 28 saves and the Jets defeated the Islanders 3-2 on Wednesday.

On Wednesday

Jets	Devils
3	2

It was a second straight victory to start the road trip for Winnipeg following a win at New Jersey on Monday.

The Jets continue their trip at Philadelphia on Friday before playing the Rangers, Florida and Tampa Bay next week. They had lost three straight at home — two in shootouts — before starting the trip.

"We gave them some life late, but we managed the game well when it counted most," Jets coach Claude Noel said. "Al made some big stops for us and we found a way to hold on."

Stuart's first goal of the season on a blast from the left point right off a faceoff eluded Kevin Poulin to the glove side at 11:27.

Ladd, the Jets' captain, made it 2-0 off a scramble in front at 14:39 with his seventh of the season. Setoguchi made it 3-0 with his sixth goal at 16:42.

Defenceman Andrew MacDonald scored for the Islanders at 17:49 of the second on the power play when he took a cross-ice pass from Thomas Vanek at the left point and fired the puck past Montoya.

John Tavares made it a one-goal game at 14:01 of the third when he poked a rebound past Montoya for his team-leading 11th goal of the season. Tavares, who assisted on MacDonald's goal, leads the Islanders with 29 points.

"We need everyone to have the same mindset, play hard every shift and do all the little extra things on the ice," Tavares said. "When we don't do that as a team, we are pretty easy to play against. No question this is frustrating and we need to address it."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Concussions. Over 200 ex-NHLers join lawsuit: Lawyers

The original concussion lawsuit against the NHL included 10 former players, and that number has already grown.

More than 200 players have joined, according to lawyers Steve Silverman and Mel Owens, who are at the forefront of the suit.

Owens, an NFL linebacker-turned-disability lawyer, said in a phone interview Wednesday that "hundreds" of ex-NHL players are going to become part of the suit, which was filed in U.S. federal court in Washington on Monday.

Quoted

"They just haven't been named yet. They're going to be there." Lawyer Mel Owens

"These are 10 players, but there's hundreds of guys that, they're in the lawsuit," said Owens, who works for NBO Law in Beverly Hills, Calif.

A list of the 200-plus players was not made available.

Sportsnet.ca was the first to report that more than 200 players joined the effort, which began with 10 players: Gary Leeman, Bradley Aitken, Darren Banks, Curt Bennett, Richard Dunn, Warren Holmes, Robert Manno, Blair James Stewart, Morris Titanic and Rick Vaive. Former New York Islanders centre Bob Bourne joined shortly after the suit was filed.

Leeman and Vaive in recent days have politely declined comment about their involvement, deferring to Silverman and Owens, who said he did not know how many players would wind up being a part of it.

"I don't know how many living alumni there are in the NHL that have these significant problems," Owens said. "I don't know that. But like in the NFL, it just matured over time. Once the players find out that 'Oh, there may be hope for me. I might be able to get some help and some treatment to address my quality-of-life issues,' I'm sure they'll be in contact."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

AFC North rivals have bone to pick on Thanksgiving

Ravens defensive tackle Brandon Williams sacks quarterback Ben Roethlisberger during the Steelers' 19-16 win on Oct. 20 in Pittsburgh. The rivals meet again in prime time on Thursday night in a game with playoff implications.
JUSTIN K. ALLER/GETTY IMAGES

NFL. Big game on U.S. holiday caps short week for Steelers, Ravens

The last time the Baltimore Ravens played on U.S. Thanksgiving, coach John Harbaugh gathered the family together for a game against brother Jim and the San Francisco 49ers.

Two years later, Harbaugh and the Ravens will spend the holiday with their most bitter rival.

It doesn't matter that Baltimore (5-6) and the Pittsburgh Steelers (5-6) both have losing records. Both teams have plenty of motivation, because Thursday night's game has playoff ramifications. Plus, these AFC North foes almost always engage in a hard-hitting, trash-talking, closely played affair.

"It's always a cool week when you go against these guys," Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco said. "It's been a good game for the last handful of years, and it's always a challenge getting ready on a short week. But they have the same issues. It should be a lot of fun."

Since Harbaugh took over the Ravens in 2008, Baltimore has faced Pittsburgh 13 times, including twice in the playoffs. Nine of those games were decided by three points, including the Steelers' 19-16 win last month.

"It's just an intense rivalry," Pittsburgh wide receiver Antonio Brown said. "Great defence is played. I think everyone understands the urgency of the game. It's just iron on iron. It's always a tough battle, and it always comes to the fourth quarter and to the end of the game."
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fast facts

- The Ravens are 4-1 at home this season compared to 1-5 on the road.
- Ravens linebacker Terrell Suggs has more sacks (16 1/2) against Pittsburgh's Ben Roethlisberger than any other quarterback.
- Steelers rookie running back Le'Veon Bell burned the Ravens for a career-high 93 yards the last time the teams played.

NFL

Packers' Rodgers a no-go, Flynn to start against Lions

Quarterback Aaron Rodgers will miss his fourth consecutive game and Matt Flynn will become the Green Bay Packers' fourth starting quarterback of the season Thursday when the Packers play the Lions in Detroit.

Rodgers, who suffered a fractured left collarbone Nov. 4 against Chicago, practised on Tuesday but was ruled out by coach Mike McCarthy on Wednesday.

The Packers have gone 0-3-1 without him.

After starting Seneca Wallace in the team's first game without Rodgers and third-stringer Scott Tolzien for the next two games after Wallace landed on injured reserve with a groin injury, McCarthy will turn to Flynn, who rallied the team to a 26-26 tie against the Minnesota Vikings Sunday.

Flynn brought the Packers back from a 23-7 fourth-quarter deficit against the Vikings, completing 21 of 36 passes for 218 yards and a touchdown. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CFL. Jones-in' for his shot as Eskimos' head coach

Chris Jones is from the small town of South Pittsburgh, Tenn., where, he says, there's a lot of blue-collar people who "work extremely hard for their money."

And that hard work, he said, is what he will bring to the Edmonton Eskimos as the 20th head coach in their history. He also brings a wealth of CFL experience. He's been a defensive coach since 2002, including stints as an assistant head coach for two years in Calgary and most recently as assistant head coach, assistant general manager and defensive co-ordinator for the Toronto Argonauts. Jones has been in the post-season each of his 12 years in the league, and won seven division titles and three Grey Cups.

The length of terms of his contract were not revealed.

"Today is about 2014 and beyond," Eskimos general manager Ed Hervey said in introducing Jones to the media and fans on Wednesday. "I know I have selected the right person to coach this team. We know there is work to do but we are committed to making this thing right and I believe our team is in the right hands of Chris Jones." THE CANADIAN PRESS

New Eskimos head coach Chris Jones addresses a news conference in Edmonton on Wednesday.
IAN JACKSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"My teams have won a lot of games, Grey Cup championships ... and it's going to continue in Edmonton." Chris Jones, the Eskimos' new head coach

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	25	16	7	2	69	52	34
Tampa Bay	25	16	8	1	76	63	33
Detroit	26	12	7	7	69	71	31
Toronto	25	14	9	2	71	66	30
Montreal	25	14	9	2	67	52	30
Ottawa	25	10	11	4	74	81	24
Florida	26	7	14	5	58	86	19
Buffalo	26	5	20	1	45	82	11

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	26	16	9	1	78	63	33
NY Rangers	25	13	12	0	53	61	26
Washington	25	12	11	2	76	74	26
Carolina	25	10	10	5	53	70	25
New Jersey	25	9	11	5	53	62	23
Philadelphia	24	10	12	2	52	60	22
Columbus	25	9	13	3	62	75	21
NY Islanders	25	8	14	3	70	85	19

Wednesday's results
Pittsburgh 6 Toronto 5 (SO)
Winnipeg 3 NY Islanders 2
Ottawa 6 Washington 4
Tampa Bay 4 Philadelphia 2
Carolina 4 New Jersey 3
Nashville 4 Columbus 0
NY Rangers 5 Florida 2
Montreal 3 Buffalo 1
Detroit 6 Boston 1
Phoenix at Minnesota
St. Louis at Colorado
Chicago at Calgary
Los Angeles at San Jose
Tuesday's result
Dallas 6 Anaheim 3
Thursday's games — All times Eastern
Vancouver at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
Edmonton at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Friday's games
Winnipeg at Philadelphia, 11:30 a.m.
NY Rangers at Boston, 1 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Tampa Bay, 4 p.m.
Detroit at NY Islanders, 4 p.m.
St. Louis at San Jose, 4 p.m.
Calgary at Anaheim, 4 p.m.
Montreal at Washington, 5 p.m.
Colorado at Minnesota, 6 p.m.
Edmonton at Columbus, 7 p.m.
New Jersey at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Buffalo, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	25	17	4	4	92	71	38
St. Louis	23	17	3	3	82	50	37
Colorado	22	17	5	0	69	45	34
Minnesota	25	15	6	4	64	58	34
Nashville	25	13	10	2	60	69	28
Winnipeg	27	12	11	4	72	78	28
Dallas	23	12	9	2	67	68	26

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	27	17	7	3	83	71	37
San Jose	23	15	3	5	79	52	35
Los Angeles	25	16	6	3	67	53	35
Phoenix	24	14	6	4	80	78	32
Vancouver	26	12	9	5	67	68	29
Calgary	23	8	11	4	64	84	20
Edmonton	25	7	16	2	65	89	16

Note: 2 points for a win, 1 point for overtime loss.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pt
Crosby, Pit	13	18	31
Steen, StL	19	10	29
Getzlaf, Ana	13	15	28
Zetterberg, Det	10	18	28
Ovechkin, Wash	20	7	27
Tavares, NYI	10	17	27
Malkin, Pit	4	23	27
Perry, Ana	13	13	26
Kane, Chi	13	13	26
H. Sedin, Van	7	18	25
Little, Win	12	12	24
Toews, Chi	12	12	24
St. Louis, TBL	10	14	24
Karlsson, Ott	7	17	24
Benn, Dal	7	17	24
Backstrom, Wash	5	19	24
Thornton, SJ	2	22	24
Stamkos, TBL	14	9	23
Seguin, Dal	12	11	23
Datsyuk, Det	12	11	23
Marleau, SJ	11	12	23
Couture, SJ	8	15	23
Kopitar, LA	7	16	23
Ryan, Ott	11	11	22
Parise, Min	11	11	22
Kunitz, Pit	11	11	22

Wednesday's games not included

NFL

WEEK 12
Thursday's games
All times Eastern
Green Bay at Detroit, 12:30 p.m.
Oakland at Dallas, 4:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Baltimore, 8:30 p.m.
Sunday's games
Jacksonville at Cleveland, 1 p.m.
New England at Houston, 1 p.m.
Arizona at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.
Miami at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.
Chicago at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Carolina, 1 p.m.
Atlanta at Buffalo, 4:05 p.m.
St. Louis at San Francisco, 4:05 p.m.
Cincinnati at San Diego, 4:25 p.m.
Denver at Kansas City, 4:25 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at Washington, 8:30 p.m.
Monday's game
New Orleans at Seattle, 8:40 p.m.

NBA

Wednesday's results
Indiana 99 Charlotte 74
Orlando 105 Philadelphia 94
Memphis 100 Boston 93
Chicago 99 Detroit 79
L.A. Lakers 99 Brooklyn 94
Miami 95 Cleveland 84
Houston 113 Atlanta 84
Oklahoma City 94 San Antonio 88
Denver 117 Minnesota 110
Washington at Milwaukee
Golden State at Dallas
Portland at Phoenix
New York at L.A. Clippers
Tuesday's results
Washington 116 L.A. Lakers 111
Brooklyn 102 Toronto 100
Orlando 109 Atlanta 92
Golden State 102 New Orleans 101

MLS PLAYOFFS

CHAMPIONSHIP

MLS CUP

Saturday, Dec. 7
Kansas City vs. Salt Lake, 4 p.m., EST

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You will be able to charm the birds out of the trees today but why waste your talents on wildlife when you can focus instead on getting your way on the work front? Employers won't be able to say "no".

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Not everyone will agree with what you do over the next 24 hours but do you care? No, you don't! No one has the power to make life difficult for you. So, if it feels good, do it.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Let someone you trust know that your happy -go-lucky act is just that. Once your share your problem, it won't be as bad when various options have been pointed out to you.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
With love planet Venus moving through the relationship area of your chart, you can't afford to be shy with affairs of the heart. If there is someone you fancy, let them know. Chances are they feel the same way about you.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
It's good to dream and some dreams will never come true and it's time you faced up to that fact. Never mind, there should be another great dream coming along soon.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You will be rather impatient today and that may be no bad thing, especially if people you work with are dragging their feet just to annoy you. Maybe you should threaten to carry on without them.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You have the happy knack of knowing what loved ones want and will go out of your way to get it for them over the next 24 hours. Don't forget your own needs though.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Mercury in your sign links with both Venus and Jupiter today, so good news is coming your way. Whatever it happens to be, don't keep it to yourself.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Make sure you know all the facts before reaching a decision about a money or business issue. Remember too that just because someone makes big noise does not mean they know what they are talking about.

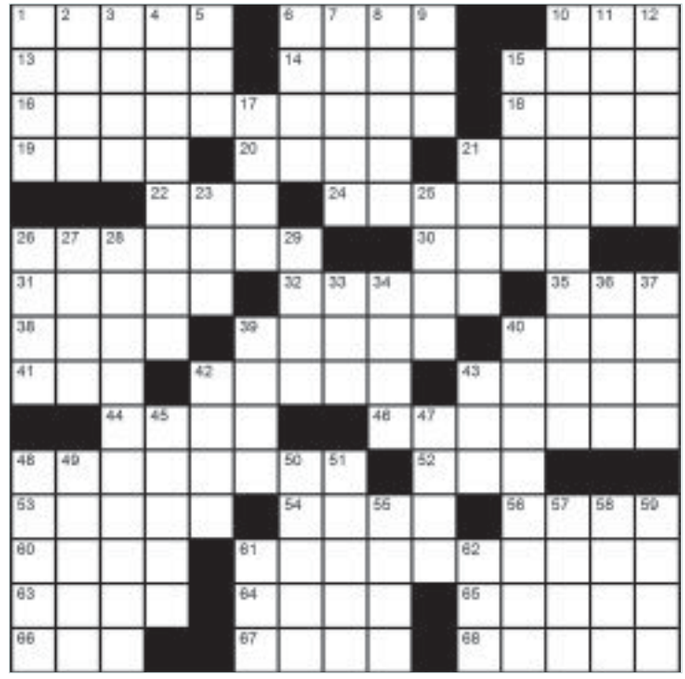
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Keep things light and don't let the cares of the world get to you. Venus in your sign makes it easy to see past negativity and make sense of what to others appears senseless. Life has meaning, and it is joy.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You can persuade almost anyone to do almost anything for you today but you don't seem happy with that "almost". You may be good with words but don't push too hard. Someone will always be immune to your charms.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
This is an excellent time to travel, ideally with friends. The things you discuss and the things you see will make you glad to be alive in this time and place. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

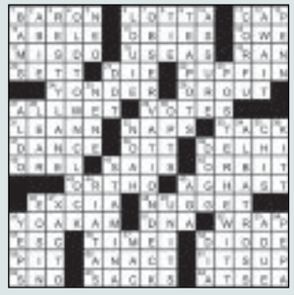
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Glisten
6. Federal force, commonly
10. Juice: French
13. Camera company
14. Margarine
15. Faxed
16. Canadian fashion designer: 2 wds.
18. Cracker spread
19. Tugboat's sound
20. Poetic nights
21. Mr. Schwarzenegger, to fans
22. Spotlight lover
24. Toronto's __ Expressway
26. Saintly
30. Border
31. __ Carta
32. Some beans
35. Li'l physician
38. Balmy
39. Casual material
40. The Dalai __
41. "..._ _ quit!" (Worker's ultimatum)
42. House fields
43. Job-giver
44. Abound
46. Canada __ for the Arts (Administrator of the annual honours at #28-Down)
48. Rihanna hit
52. Carrot, e.g.
53. "Hang Ten" Canadian singer
54. Govern
56. Sicilian volcano
60. Actress, Sharon __
61. As per #28-Down... Fiction book winner: The __ by Eleanor Catton, set in New Zealand
63. Deviate
64. Tunestress Tori
65. Capital of Belarus
66. Antiquity
67. Secret-passer's sound effect
68. Writer W.B. with Reshmi __"
28. _ _ _. __ (Prestigious honour for Canadian writers, trendy-style ...see 2013 winners at #4-Down and #61-Across)
29. Ball of yarn
33. Caravansary
34. Filing abbr.
36. Sacred Buddhist peak
37. Director Mr. Reiner
39. "Curses!"
40. Victoria's Secret apparel
42. Rock's Kings of __
43. Shade
45. Actress Ms. Procter
47. Baking need
48. Search into
49. Model
50. Ringo's instruments
51. Wrestlers of Japan
55. Itemize
57. Frank Sinatra daughter
58. Cozy retreat
59. Requests
61. Swimming segment
62. Ms. Poehler

Down
1. Jazz singing style
2. Religious 'ring'
3. Data
4. As per #28-Down... Poetry book winner: Katherena Vermette for __ __ Love Songs, set in the Winnipeg neighbourhood of the title
5. Compass dir.
6. Red __ Tea
7. Held on tightly
8. High IQ society
9. Disc in a 1990s fad game
10. The Maid of Orleans, b.1412 - d.1431: 2 mots
11. Take apart laces
12. Drive
15. Parsley portion
17. Ashton's ex
21. Tots up
23. Menu words
25. Printing quantity
26. G.I.'s weapon need
27. "CBC News Now

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	6			7		1		8
5				9	4			
			1					4
			6	8	1	3	9	
				3				
	5	1	7	4	9			
9					7			
			2	6				9
6		7		5			8	

Yesterday's Sudoku

4	1	9	3	8	5	7	2	6
3	8	5	7	2	1	4	9	8
8	7	2	9	6	4	3	1	5
7	2	6	4	5	8	1	3	9
5	3	8	2	1	9	6	7	4
9	4	1	6	3	7	5	8	2
6	8	4	1	9	3	2	5	7
1	5	7	8	4	2	9	6	3
2	9	3	5	7	6	8	4	1

Today
-9°/-11°
Variable
Friday
-4°/-11°
Partly cloudy
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Check the 14 day trend.
TWN incorporates MSC data

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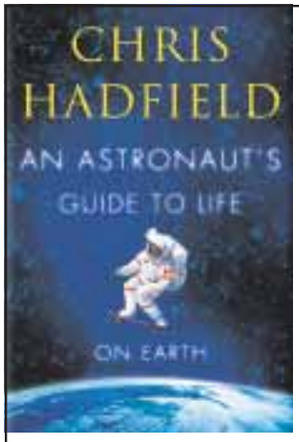

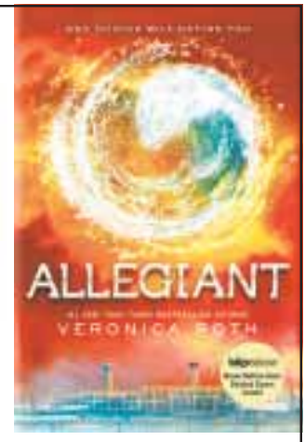

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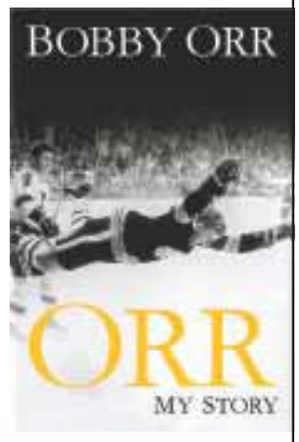

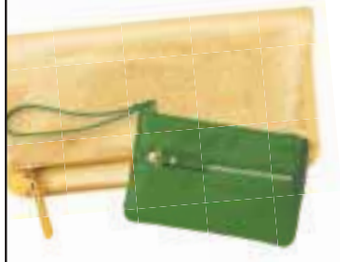

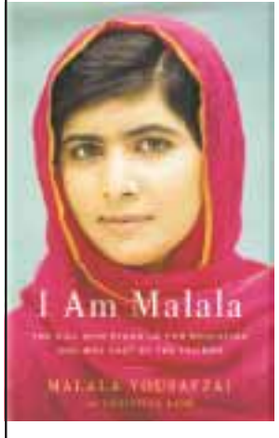

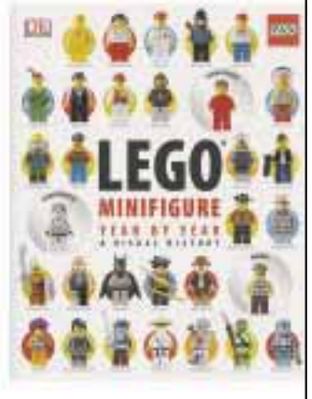

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